(b) if so, what special funding policy Government proposes to adopt in order to meet such expenses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) National Curriculum Framework 2005 has recommended that Health and Physical Education must continue as a compulsory subject from primary to the secondary stages and as an optional subject at higher secondary stage of education. Accordingly, physical education is taught as a compulsory curriculum in classes I to XII in schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education. Games and sports and yoga are an integral part of the physical education curriculum.

(b) No special funding policy has been proposed for this purpose.

Fee hikes in IIMs

3558. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken note of steep hike in fees announced by Indian Institutes of Managements especially IIM, Ahmedabad, effecting a three-fold increase from Rs. 2.00 lakhs to Rs. 6.00 lakhs per year;

(b) whether such a move would incapacitate the poor from SC/ST/OBC students securing admission in IIMs; and

(c) to what extent Government has reconciled to the decision of IIM managements on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The IIM Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri R.C. Bhargava have submitted an Interim Report on 4th April, 2008 to the Government to ask all the Indian Institutes of management (IIMs) to defer any increase in fee and keep it at the level of December 2007 (*i.e.* at Rs. 3 lakhs or less as the case may be) till such time as the Committee submits its Final Report to the Government. The same has been forwarded to all the Chairman of IIMs.

Committee to look into fee structure in higher education

3559. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to set up an expert committee to look into various aspects concerning the fee structure in higher education and thus arrive at a strategy whereby the fee for higher education is neither ridiculously low nor poses a barrier in equitable access to higher education;

(b) whether the Planning Commission has also recommended that fee structure should be revised to cover up to 20 per cent of the operational costs; and

(c) by when Government is likely to finalize the fee structure ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The University Grants Commission (UGC) has constituted a Committee to prepare draft Regulations for admission and fee structure in self financing Universities and Colleges.

(b) and (c) the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) Committee on financing of higher education had recommended that student fee as a proportion of revenues of institutions should not exceed 20%. In the XI Plan document, the Planning Commission also has, *inter-alia,* suggested that since most university students come from top 10% of the population by income levels, they would be able to pay fees amounting to 20% of the operating cost of general higher education, and that fee levels should, therefore, be increased gradually in existing institutions, but the new norms could be implemented in new institutions from the start. The Government does not finalise the fee structure of educational institutions.

Assessment of English medium schools

3560. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what kind of mechanism Government has to test the quality of education imparted in English medium schools, where parents are spending enormous time and money;

(b) whether there is any objective basis to conduct comparative study of our schools, with those of the developed country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details as to what the Government proposes to do to promote critical thinking and to develop practical skills among the school children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Government has not conducted any study regarding the quality of education imparted in the English medium schools. However, Government of India couducts its own pupil learning achievement surveys under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) through National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The surveys aim to track changes in learning achievement levels of students and to give a national picture of the status of students' learning levels.

(b) and (c) This Ministry has not conducted any such comparative study.

(d) National Curriculum Framework (NCF)—2005, lays special emphasis on the primacy of children's experiences and their active involvement in the process of learning. The use of pedagogy to promote critical thinking among children thereby leading them away from rote learning to a reflection of their own ways of understanding and learning is an important step towards improving school education. The syllabi and textbooks developed by NCERT on the basis of NCF-2005 signify an attempt to implement the basic idea of a child-centered system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education.